

I believe that the changes made in 2000 were sufficient. Anyone who wants a license can get one today. We already have a no code license. There is no backlog of individuals out there being prevented by the code requirement. It's just not there. If we eliminate this element, other elements are sure to follow, since most arguments made against element 1 can also be made against testing in general.

Our hobby is supposed to be free of monetary interests, ie we can't charge for our services or knowledge. However, the groups most behind the push for dropping the code, NCI and W5YI-NCVEC, have turned our hobby into a commercial money making enterprise for themselves. We have also seen this trend with the talk of the "professional" amateur, and the desire to drop the word amateur from the hobbies name. Also with the significant amounts now being charged for training. This group wants to commercialize the hobby, and their desire to make money has clouded their reasoning and affected their judgement. The most explosive growth in ham radio involving younger operators is in QRP. Without code, QRP becomes very difficult. (From my experience as a VE) The average person spends from three to ten weeks to be able to pass the current code test. Most come in around six weeks. How is that a problem? We are not a commercial service. What we have is unique, if we devalue it, we will not see an increase in the numbers of active hams, we will only see the hobby disappear into irrelevance.

I've been a VE since '97 for CAVEC, ARRL and W5YI. The contents of the petition were a real load. Every sentence was undocumented or hear say. They never once asked any of the real VEs anything. That stuff about an undo burden was really over the top. I'm the one that gives the tests, not them; they just sit around on their behinds and pontificate.